

Northern Divide Grizzly Bear Project

U. S. Geological Survey

Student Contractor:

How Many:

- We anticipate offering 32 U.S. Geological Survey Student Contractor positions to those who will act as Crew Leaders or Crew Assistants.

Qualifications:

- To qualify for a Student Contractor position, applicants must be either currently enrolled in a full-time degree seeking program or have graduated from a degree seeking program no earlier than September 18, 2003. You must be 18 years of age or older to qualify.

Required Skills:

- Must be physically fit and capable of hiking distances of up to 15 miles while carrying back pack loads of 25-80 lbs. in mountainous terrain, in inclement weather conditions, often off-trail. Other natural hazards include biting insects, mountain river crossings, snow/ice field crossings, and potentially dangerous wildlife (e.g. mountain lions, bears, and moose).
- Some positions will be duty-stationed in remote, primitive wilderness settings for three continuous months.
- Ability to recognize landscape and vegetative features important in identifying suitable locations for the construction of hair snag stations.
- Must possess a valid driver's license.
- Ability or willingness to learn to identify bear rub objects.
- Ability or willingness to learn to use handheld GPS units.
- Knowledge and experience in conducting wildlife surveys following specific standards and protocols.
- Ability to make decisions related to work schedules and day-to-work problems with a minimum of supervision.
- Ability to navigate and work safely in remote backcountry environments and relate well with co-workers under potentially extreme working conditions.

Length of Employment:

- Approximately June 1 – September 15, 2003. **The length of employment and work schedule for the 2004 field season are NOT negotiable** (unless you are a student returning to school for the fall semester). For more information please refer to jobs website.

Duties:

Job duties will vary, but most crews will be constructing hair snags consisting of 25 m of barbed wire strung around several trees at a height of 50 cm and pouring three liters of liquid scent lure derived from rotten animal matter onto logs in the center. The project leader, working with area biologists, managers, and other local experts, will have previously selected the hair snag site locations. Crews will navigate to each site by the use of maps, compasses, handheld GPS units, and written directions. In areas where livestock may encounter and destroy hair snag sites, cattle exclusion fences have already been constructed. However, in 2004 some crews will be building additional fences, repairing any damages that occurred over winter, and removing all fences upon completion of the field season. Crews must collect hair samples following strict handling protocols, submit comprehensive data, and perform physically demanding duties on a strict schedule. As part of a non-invasive project, crews will be collecting hair from barbed wire and will not be involved with wildlife immobilization and handling, nor are observations of grizzly bears in the field guaranteed. In addition to their hair snagging duties, many crews will be collecting hair samples from bear rub objects (previously identified during the 2003 field season) throughout the region's trail systems, forest roads, and power-pole lines.

Personnel are to conduct themselves in a safe and ethical manner. Crews consist of a crew leader and a crew assistant. Crews are to travel together **at all times** for safety reasons. If a member of the crew shows disregard for their partner and leaves them behind on- or off-trail disciplinary action will be taken.

U.S. Geological Survey Student Contractor positions will act as Crew Leaders or Crew Assistants. Listed below are the duties of each.

Crew Leader

Working as part of a 2-person crew, the Crew Leader will take on the responsibility of their assigned duties, equipment, and data quality. They will be expected to have experience and competence working in the backcountry, and may be paired with a co-worker who has no such prior field experience.

The Crew Leader is responsible for:

- conducting themselves in a safe and ethical manner
- ensuring they are adequately prepared with supplies to complete assigned tasks
- maintaining necessary gear and equipment in good working order
- maintaining vehicles and housing (if provided by the project) in good order
- completing assigned tasks in a timely manner
- helping to transport supplies throughout the study area
- conveying thorough and accurate information when interacting with local agency personnel, the public, backcountry users, and private landowners
- may have to operate 4-wheel drive vehicles, ATVs, and trailers
- proper use of GPS units, two-way radios and satellite phones, map and compass, camping gear, Leave-No-Trace backcountry ethics, etc.
- following local restrictions and protocols which will vary depending on land ownership (such as radio communication, food storage, fire prevention, weed control, campsite reservations, cabin use, road access, etc.)
- maintaining vehicles, housing, and property in good order
- navigating to previously selected hair snag site locations
- properly constructing hair snag stations and rub objects
- recording data in a complete, concise, and legible manner
- proper collection and storage of samples
- delivery of collected data and samples to Subunit Leader

Crew Assistant

An assistant to the Crew Leader on a 2-person crew. Crew Assistants will perform essentially the same duties as the Crew Leader, however fewer expectations and more guidance regarding backcountry skills will be given. Accordingly, the requirements for hiring are slightly less than with Crew Leader positions.

The Crew Assistant is responsible for:

- conducting themselves in a safe and ethical manner
- assisting in adequately preparing their crew with supplies to complete assigned tasks
- maintaining necessary gear and equipment in good working order
- maintaining vehicles and housing (if provided by the project) in good order
- completing assigned tasks in a timely manner
- helping to transport supplies throughout the study area
- conveying thorough and accurate information when interacting with local agency personnel, the public, backcountry users, and private landowners
- may have to operate 4-wheel drive vehicles, ATVs, and trailers
- proper use of GPS units, two-way radios and satellite phones, map and compass, camping gear, Leave-No-Trace backcountry ethics, etc.
- following local restrictions and protocols which will vary depending on land ownership (such as radio communication, food storage, fire prevention, weed control, campsite reservations, cabin use, road access, etc.)
- assist in maintaining vehicles, housing, and property in good order
- assisting in the navigation to previously selected hair snag site locations
- assist in the proper construction of hair snag stations and rub objects
- assist in recording data in a complete, concise, and legible manner
- assist in proper collection and storage of samples
- assist with delivery of collected data and samples to Subunit Leader

Duty Station: For more information about Duty Stations refer to jobs website.

Duty Station locations will vary widely throughout the NCDE, including National Park, Forest Service, Wilderness, State, Tribal, corporate, and/or private lands. Crews will be based out of many different locales ranging from backcountry ranger stations thirty miles from the road to housing in small communities. The study area lies north of Interstate 90, east of Flathead Lake and Lake Koocanusa, extends into the Rocky Mountain Front toward the communities of Browning and Choteau, and is bound to the north by the Canadian border. It is divided into nine subunits for logistical organization, each with unique situations with regards to duty stations. The following are possible conditions of duty stations.

• Wilderness

- Refers to being stationed in areas where it is not possible or unlikely that an individual will be able to exit the backcountry during their days off. Therefore these people will have to plan to spend the duration of the field season in the backcountry. We do not anticipate assigning student contractors or volunteers to wilderness duty stations, although exceptions may be made when it serves in the best interest of the Project.

- **Backcountry**

- Refers to anywhere not near roads. You hike on trails, or off-trail, and spend nights camping with the gear and equipment you pack in. In these cases you will be at your duty station or be able to hike out of the backcountry on your days off. However it may be possible that you will be in the backcountry while working for up to 9 days at a time.

- **Frontcountry**

- Refers to anywhere you are near roads, towns, etc. and will be making day hikes on a daily basis.

Pay:

- **Salary:**

- The work period will be bi-weekly using a flexible work schedule. Work will be adjusted to fit within an 80-hour work period. There will be no opportunity to earn overtime pay or compensatory time.
- Hourly pay is based on the highest level of education achieved: high school diploma, 1 year of college, 2 or more years of college, or a bachelor's degree. Compensation will not include overtime pay or overnight backcountry per diem. However, for those exceptional cases when a student contractor is assigned to a wilderness duty station, subsistence in lieu of per diem will be provided as with USFS personnel.

- **Meals:**

- Must provide own food and will not be paid any per diem for overnights away from their duty station.

- **Other:**

- Student contractors are covered by the USGS for liability and Tort claims. Student contractors are not considered federal employees and have no claim to federal benefits. Student contractors are responsible for paying their own income taxes, and are not covered for unemployment claims.